

Hawaii Buddhist Women's News

HONPA HONGWANJI MISSION OF HAWAII FEDERATION OF BUDDHIST WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS

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Message from the President: Irene Nakamoto

During the 2016-2017 term, the Federation meetings were held at different temples: Kailua Hongwanji, Mililani Hongwanji, Pearl City Hongwanji, and Jikoen Hongwanji (in October) so the Board and Chairs could experience the different temples and surrounding areas. Each meeting encompassed an educational work/fun session focused on the dharma in BWA and educational leadership for women. Mrs. Kiyo Masuda shared the "Essential Teaching Expanded" based on Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha to make the dharma relevant for students. BWA is encouraged to live the dharma.



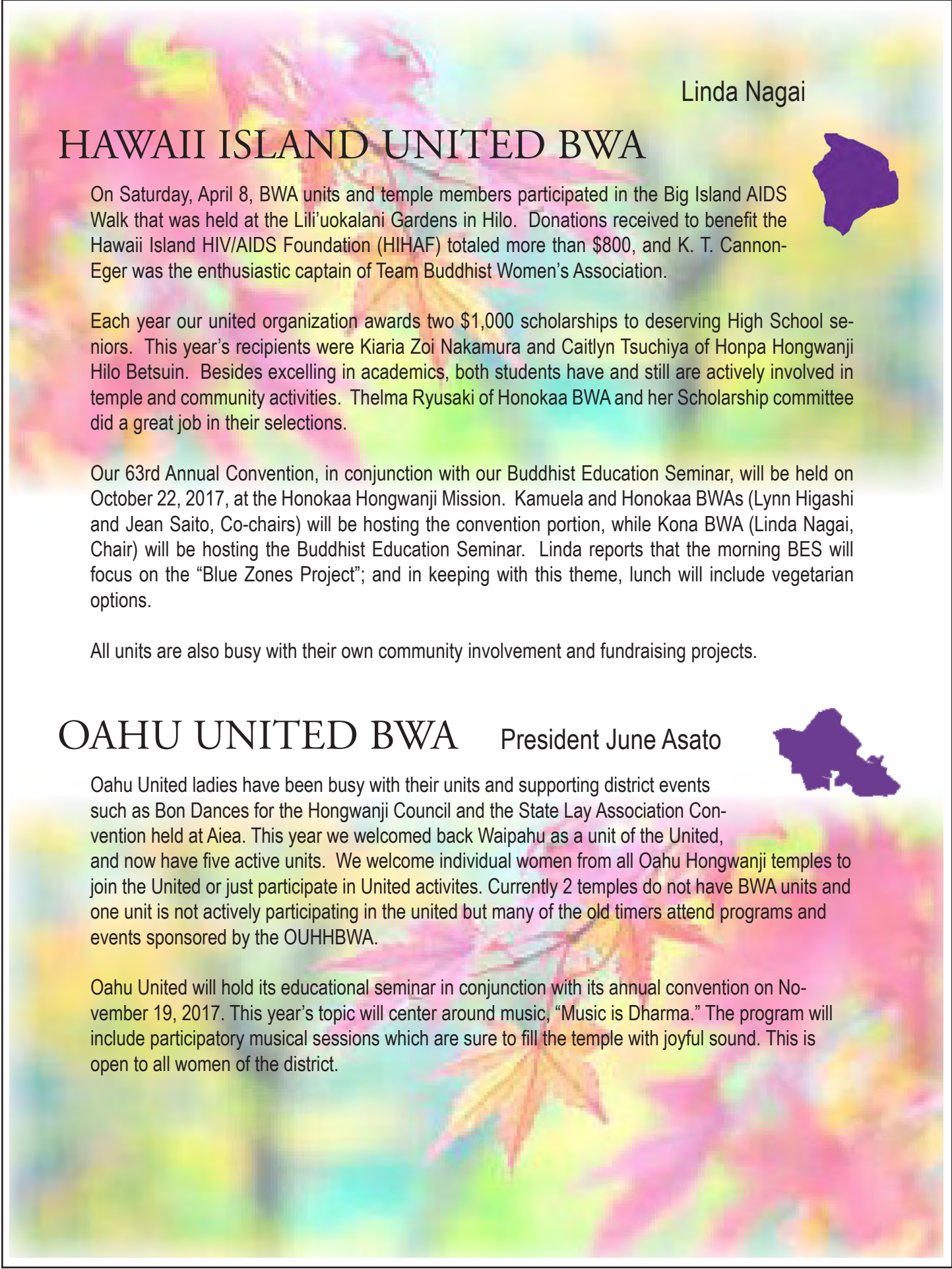
Some reflection of two years (2016-2017):

- Annual talk story/social hour before each Giseikai meeting where BWA members throughout the state could gather, talk, and socialize. (2016: Mrs. Shizue Yahata, BCA BWA President joined us)
- Two films supported by Social Concerns Committee were shown at Giseikai: "The Surrender Call" and "The Herbert Yanamura Story". Also included: "Takejiro Higa Story"
- Financial support to the Pacific Buddhist Academy, Hongwanji Mission School, Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii Ministerial Training Fund, Ohana Arts, YESS Camp for students ages 13-23.
- BWA pledge was put to music by BJ Soriano of Hilo Hongwanji BWA.
- Student Exchange Program: Two students from Japan (August 12-19, 2016: Hinano Nishihata and Mami Takayanagi.) Two students from Hawaii visited Japan (July, 2017: Kiaria Zoi Nakamura, Hilo, Hawaii) and Brandi Aiko Yamamoto, Kapaa, Kauai).
- 2018 Joint Conference Planning committee leadership
- Continued to participate in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade (4 years). 2016: Attended the NAACP Awards Gala prior to the parade day with representatives from the Unitarian Church and Quaker group.
- Some of our BWA units have invited the Muslim ladies to speak to them and to join together in fellowship. The cultural and spiritual sharing has been an enlightening experience for our members.

Thank you to everyone who worked hard to make this biennium a meaningful and enjoyable experience for all! Most of all, thank you to our Board members who carried on during the period of my illness/absence and made sure that all business was implemented. The strength of the BWA ladies to join together to live the dharma by their actions was evident as they came together to "carry on". What a powerful and impressive group of women! Let us continue to move forward and support the new leaders who will be installed on October 7, 2017. We congratulate them as they take office and wish them well as they continue to fulfill the purpose and goals of this organization.

With the 2018 Honpa Hongwanji Joint Conference happening during the Labor Day weekend, let us all gather at Ala Moana Hotel in unity to participate in learning, sharing, and living the dharma! Let us show our participation in numbers and strength. Register as soon as the registration forms are distributed. And sign up early to stay at the Ala Moana Hotel (and be sure to say that you are with the "Honpa Hongwanji Joint Conference.")

In Gassho, Irene



Linda Nagai

HAWAII ISLAND UNITED BWA

On Saturday, April 8, BWA units and temple members participated in the Big Island AIDS Walk that was held at the Lili'uokalani Gardens in Hilo. Donations received to benefit the Hawaii Island HIV/AIDS Foundation (HIHAF) totaled more than \$800, and K. T. Cannon-Eger was the enthusiastic captain of Team Buddhist Women's Association.

Each year our united organization awards two \$1,000 scholarships to deserving High School seniors. This year's recipients were Kiaria Zoi Nakamura and Caitlyn Tsuchiya of Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin. Besides excelling in academics, both students have and still are actively involved in temple and community activities. Thelma Ryusaki of Honokaa BWA and her Scholarship committee did a great job in their selections.

Our 63rd Annual Convention, in conjunction with our Buddhist Education Seminar, will be held on October 22, 2017, at the Honokaa Hongwanji Mission. Kamuela and Honokaa BWAs (Lynn Higashi and Jean Saito, Co-chairs) will be hosting the convention portion, while Kona BWA (Linda Nagai, Chair) will be hosting the Buddhist Education Seminar. Linda reports that the morning BES will focus on the "Blue Zones Project"; and in keeping with this theme, lunch will include vegetarian options.

All units are also busy with their own community involvement and fundraising projects.

OAHU UNITED BWA

President June Asato

Oahu United ladies have been busy with their units and supporting district events such as Bon Dances for the Hongwanji Council and the State Lay Association Convention held at Aiea. This year we welcomed back Waipahu as a unit of the United, and now have five active units. We welcome individual women from all Oahu Hongwanji temples to join the United or just participate in United activities. Currently 2 temples do not have BWA units and one unit is not actively participating in the united but many of the old timers attend programs and events sponsored by the OUHHBWA.

Oahu United will hold its educational seminar in conjunction with its annual convention on November 19, 2017. This year's topic will center around music, "Music is Dharma." The program will include participatory musical sessions which are sure to fill the temple with joyful sound. This is open to all women of the district.

MAUI UNITED BWA



Sharon Nohara



In the midst of Fall, reflecting on the cooler weather with dreams of viewing vibrant Fall colors brings an extra sense of gratitude to life on this great planet. Part of this gratitude encompasses dana, the act of selfless giving. The Maui United Buddhist Women's Association (MUBWA) loves to be a part of dana, not only as random acts of kindness throughout the year, but also focused on the education and spiritual dharma growth of children. Annually, support is given to the Maui United Jr. YBA, Young Enthusiastic Shinshu Seekers (YESS) and the Valley Isle Dharma School Teachers Association (VIDSTA). In addition to the work each dharma school teacher does to effectively share the dharma, VIDSTA has a picnic to welcome the new school year and share with the children how doing things together as one brings smiles and growth; certainly the saying, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, shows life at its best.

This year MUBWA also had a special activity called "Throw In The Towel" where collections of towels (and toiletries) were shared with A Cup of Cold Water (ACCW), a group helping the homeless, and the Maui Humane Society. BWA groups also participate in ACCW's ongoing PB&J sandwich making activity.

Annually, MUBWA's Dana/Aloha Committee selects an organization to receive a monetary award in gratitude for the work that they do. This year's recipient was Islands Hospice - Maui. This organization has serviced so many on Maui with great compassionate care.

MUBWA also visits long-term care facilities where gifts of needed items are shared with the facilities and clients. The individual BWA groups always do additional activities to help brighten lives, planned or at the spur of the moment! Practicing dana is so very precious. Namo Amida Butsu.

*VIDSTA (photo from 2014)



HONOLULU UNITED BWA

Donna Higashi

On September 30th, the Honolulu United BWA observed it's Joint Education and General Membership Conference at the Hawaii Betsuin annex temple and main social hall. Using the education theme "Embrace the Earth with Aloha" we were treated by keynote speaker, Dave Atcheson and several local panel members on subjects that encouraged us to live our lives in harmony with our environment. We also participated in hands-on activities on recycling. The membership portion of the day included the Election of new officers for 2018-2019 and the awarding of Dana awards of \$1,000 each to four non-profit organizations. However, we are saddened to report that Kailua Hongwanji BWA established in 1966 will no longer be part of the Honolulu United as of December 2017. We graciously thank their members (past and present) for their many years of involvement and sincerely hope that they will join us as our guests in the future especially since 2018 will be the First Joint Conference at Ala Moana Hotel and 2019 will be the 16th World BW Convention in San Francisco, CA.



We had re-use, recycle, repurpose hands-on activities. This one shows BWA ladies who took an old t-shirt and made it into an apron. Activity was led by Carol Yamamoto. It was not hard to do...clip, clip and wallah! a very useful apron.

KAUAI UNITED BWA

Lynette Miyamoto



The Kauai United Hongwanji Buddhist Women's Association awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to Akira Takabayashi. Akira is one of the Valedictorians of Kauai High School Class of 2017 and a National Merit Scholarship Finalist. He will attend the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, majoring in Computer Science. Akira is active in Lihue Hongwanji Mission's Dharma School and Boy Scouts Troop 83.

Lynne Matsumura, VP of KUHBWA presents a \$1,000 scholarship to Akira Takabayashi.



The Kauai United BWA Eshini and Kakushinni Day service was held on April 23, 2017 at the Lihue Hongwanji Mission, hospitably hosted by the Lihue Hongwanji Women's Association. BWA members and guests from West Kauai Hongwanji and Kapaa Hongwanji enjoyed a memorable day. This year's speaker was Ms. Carol Valentine. She shared Eshinni and Kakuninni's story with the Kauai Ohana.

**Kiaria Nakamura**

Reflection Journal: BWA Student Trip to Japan

This summer, I had the opportunity to go to Japan as one of two young women selected by the Buddhist Women's Association. Even though I had been to Japan before, trust me when I say this trip was like no other.

Day 1

This first day was spent with the YBICSE group who was a very welcoming and friendly bunch. We got to tour the Amdia-do and Goeido as well as participate in an invigorating scavenger hunt that explored the different patterns of wood in the floor. Shortly after a delicious lunch, we had a rather eye-opening Dharma talk that enabled us to share our struggles and understandings of Jodo-Shinshu Buddhism. That night was an exciting Dinner Party where everyone got the chance to mingle, play icebreakers, and eat Japanese finger food. It was so great to see everyone getting into the various games and activities. I felt very close to everyone and it was only the first day!

Day 2

The next day started off bright and early at 4:30 AM as we were all asked to go to the daily service at Honzan. While I was eager to go, I was not so eager at the time at which I had to wake up. Nevertheless, the service was a very grounding experience and it was interesting to see all the people who venture to this beautiful temple every morning, dedicated to Buddhism. Later that day we visited Mount Hiei which was a very naturalistic and harmonious hike with a beautiful view at the top. Up there waiting for us was a healthy vegetarian lunch that we all had the pleasure of trying for the first time. After that, we went to Ohtani Mausoleum where we had the opportunity to view Shinran Shonin's shrine and witness the remains of Shin Buddhists from all over the world. That afternoon, the audience with the Gomonsu was held. Even though I had already received my confirmation of rites, it was a cool experience to view this ceremony as a non-participant.

Day 3

This day was yet another early morning to go to service at Honzan but I began to get used to the time difference so it wasn't as bad. Shortly after we got to go on the infamous Bullet Train where we all got a chance to bond more and talk to people we hadn't yet gotten a chance to converse with. Once we arrived in Hiroshima, we visited both Hiroshima Betsuin and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum/Park. Each landmark expressed the tragic backstory of the Atomic Bomb dropping. Being there and hearing the various stories that came along with it was hard for me to handle. I can only imagine what the people who actually experienced this horrific event felt. Once the tours were done and over with, we had to say goodbye to our new YBICSE friends and go our separate ways as the BWA program soon began.

Day 4

That morning we began our journey to our homestay family by taking the Shinkansen to Fukuoka. Waiting on the platform were our homestay father and sister. They were so friendly and welcoming that I already knew this was going to be an amazing experience. Once we were settled, we ate lunch at a cute little buffet restaurant, visited a local craft fair, and ventured to Don Quixote. It was my first time there and I was in awe of the variety of things that you could buy there. After shopping, we finally go to visit the house and meet the rest of the family. They were all so excited that their happiness radiated onto me and made me less homesick.

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Day 5

Though we had morning service here too, fortunately it was three hours later than the time we had to be ready back at Honzan. After that, our homestay mother cooked us a huge breakfast to give us energy for our day of shopping. We went to American stores such as Forever 21, H&M, and Starbucks, but also visited Japan shops including Ippudon (for lunch), LINE Café, Daiso, and the pop-up Minion Café. I shopped so much that I actually had to purchase a duffel bag to fit everything into. Later that night we went to a rather entertaining Okinawan music concert which I really enjoyed as half of my family immigrated from Okinawa. I consider myself to be an avid "Uchinanchu". After that, I had my first experience eating "Shabu-Shabu". Though I was hesitant at first, I grew to really enjoy both the food and the experience of cooking your own food.

Day 6

On this day we had an early breakfast before service as members of their temple came to join us. During the service, Brandi and I go to stand up and introduce ourselves by talking about where we came from, what we enjoyed doing, and what obon is like in Hawaii. It was so fun to get to know the other temple members and see that they aren't so different from the ones back home from my church. They were all so friendly and easy to talk to especially since a lot of them spoke English. Being that we mingled with so many people, both Brandi and I took a long nap afterwards. Once we awoke, our homestay dad insisted on more shopping at a popular outlet mall nearby. I was able to snag a cute Adidas shirt on sale and try Tully's Coffee for the first time. Once we got back, I played with the older homestay grandson, Koken, by learning how to spin plates on a stick. Though we didn't speak the same language, we had loads of fun together and he reminded me of my little brother back home.

Day 7

After another delicious breakfast and nap session, Brandi and I got to sit in on a communication class that the temple offered. It basically went over how to empathize with others in order to enhance our communication abilities. It emphasized the value of compromise while still being confident in your personal beliefs. Though the fact that there was a language barrier was an issue, we managed to all come to a common understanding at the end. After that we tried Japanese pizza for the first time. Though there were weird toppings that I never saw before on the pizza, it tasted amazing and I wish we had that in America. Later that day, our host brother and his wife took us grocery shopping for the Hawaiian dinner we were planning to cook on our last night with our family. I do admit shopping was quite difficult as we weren't familiar with Japanese labels and took the risk of substituting several ingredients as Japan does not have Hawaii products. After finding everything we needed, we got to go with the family to pick up the youngest grandson, Hojun, from his pre-school. All the young kids were so happy and carefree. It was quite the sight to see! Shortly after, they took us out to an astounding buffet that had everything from curry to udon to fried rice. Just thinking about it makes me hungry.

Day 8

This last day started off with another morning service and delicious breakfast. Brandi and I got started on our Hawaiian dinner in the morning by prepping the tofu pie dessert that way we had one less thing to worry about later. Once we were through with that, our homestay brother took us shopping at yet another beautiful Japanese mall that had the most spectacular architecture. It sort of reminded me of Disneyland with how everything looked. After shopping, our host family introduced us to a custom I had never heard of known as "sweet

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time". Basically, at around 3 PM, Japanese people indulged in some sort of small dessert. I wish America had that way of thinking. Finally the time had come—cooking for our host family! Our menu consisted of homemade patties in a loco moco with scrambled eggs and fried rice, spam chowder, and tofu pie. The family had never eaten anything like what we made before and was so thankful for our "excellent cooking". I was so relieved to hear that they enjoyed what we prepared. I was quite nervous that we weren't going to be able to pull it off.

Day 9

The time had come for us to say goodbye to our wonderful homestay family. I couldn't believe that time flew by so quickly. Before I knew it we were on the train headed back to Kyoto to meet up with the BWA ladies who were behind this program. While I was scared to meet with such important women, I was relieved to find that they were so friendly and eager to meet with us. We also had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet with Lady Ohtani who was such a respectable, informed, and eloquent woman. I aspire to be like her someday. Later that night we had a type of dinner I had never seen before—the restaurant worker basically just continuously bring you different meal courses. I could barely keep up and was pretty full by the third or fourth course. Nevertheless, it was cool to eat such new foods and talk to the other ladies while doing so.

Day 10

Just like the last few days, this day began with several train rides until we reached Wakayama. There, we met up with another BWA member who drove us to a quaint little place called Porto Europe. It had everything from food to rides to games to shops and looked as if someone dropped part of Europe in the middle of Japan. It was super cool, super hot, and super fun. Brandi and I ended up doing a ninja-themed maze that was much harder than we anticipated. Though it was stressful, it turned out to be one of the most memorable experiences on the trip. There were many laughs, fails, trips, and screams. That night, we had something called "fusion cuisine". I had no idea what it was then and I still don't know what it is not. What I do know though is that it was delicious.

Day 11

This last day began with a leisure breakfast that I was thankful for as we then hiked up Wakayama Castle. Though I was secretly exhausted from the walking, I tried my best to not appear that way as the BWA ladies seemed to be hiking no problem. I didn't want to be the sole 18-year-old that couldn't make it up a few flights up stairs haha! After that, we packed up our belongings (and my brand new suitcase as my things still did not fit!) and headed to A BWA member's home for some ice cold somen. It was very refreshing and I was glad to be off of my feet. Unfortunately once that was over, we headed to the airport and said our final thank-yous and goodbyes.

Going on this exchange program was not only a privilege, but it was also a pleasure. I had the opportunity to meet phenomenal people, travel to breathtaking places, eat extraordinary food, and partake in unforgettable activities. This year, seven young women applied to this program. Knowing this, and the other girls who apply, I was anything but confident that I would be 1 of 2 delegates selected. But, I did it. And I am beyond glad that I did. Thank you to everyone who has helped me achieve all that I have because without you, I would have never been able to take part in such a memorable experience.

THE END

Brandi Aiko Yamamoto

Impermanence, Interdependence, and Everlasting Memories BWA Exchange Student Report

Impermanence and Interdependence. These two words come to mind when I think about Jodo Shinshu Buddhism. These words also come to mind when thinking about life itself. I feel that this is why I view Buddhism as a way of life instead of a religion. Keeping these two terms in mind, I would like to share the experiences that I have gained as a participant of the Hawaii Federation of Buddhist Women's Association's Student Exchange program.

On July 10th, I left home for an amazing and meaningful trip to study Buddhist and Japanese traditions in the Land of the Rising Sun. The program lasted for 12 days and was filled with experiences which have helped me to create memories that will last a lifetime. From the fast pace of Kyoto to the peaceful surroundings of the Ganoji Temple, I believe that I have gained a better understanding of the Jodo Shinshu Buddhist culture in Japan as well as the workings of their Federation of BWA's.

In dharma talks given by many ministers, we often hear the terms impermanence and interdependence. We use these concepts in our everyday lives and I definitely feel that we learned more about these terms while traveling in Japan. Impermanence is also stressed as an important factor in my study of social work. Often, my professors, classmates, and colleagues will say "The only thing constant/permanent in life is change." This holds true to so many aspects of our daily lives. Particularly, during the BWA Exchange Program, impermanence was presented to us in many ways. The first was learning

about the history of Hongwanji. We listened to many different speakers who talked about this topic and they also talked about how Jodo Shinshu Buddhism made its way to America, Canada, Brazil and other countries. When going to Hiroshima, we learned about how a busy and upbeat town became the target of a country's anger toward another country in the form of an Atomic Bomb. Hiroshima is still changing to this day. Like many areas in Japan, Hiroshima continues to build structures and buildings. They are also renovating the A-Bomb museum in order to teach others about why nuclear war is not an answer and why it should come to an end. This whole trip taught me to appreciate every moment and every event that we experience in our everyday lives.



LEARNING ABOUT THE ATOMIC BOMB FROM A 2ND GENERATION HIBAKUSHA (ATOMIC BOMB VICTIM)

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HAWAII YBICSE/BWA STUDENTS AFTER ARRIVING IN JAPAN

Interdependence was demonstrated in many ways during our adventures in Japan. When we participated in the beginning portions of the YBICSE program, we participated in many different activities that taught us how to depend on each other. The coordinators of the program challenged us by grouping us with participants from Buddhist Churches of America, Buddhist Churches of Canada, and Sul Americana Da Seita Jodo Shinshu Honpa Hongwanji (Brazil). The activities we engaged in were used to teach us about how we are all dependent upon each other and how we are all just one part of a bigger picture. While we are just one piece, without us, the picture would never be complete. I feel that this is also true in our temples here in Hawaii. Every member is unique in their own way so we must be able to embrace anyone and everyone in our sangha.



After separating from the YBICSE group, Zoi and I travelled to Fukuoka by Shinkansen. On our way there, we met Midori Kunisaki, a former BWA Exchange Participant who travelled to BCA. She stayed with us during the first few days with Nakagawa Sensei and his family at Ganoji Temple. It was such a great experience to be welcomed into the Nakagawa Family with open arms. Each of the family members were very welcoming and really made me feel as if I was a part of their family. Every morning, the family would attend morning service together. One morning, the Ganoji Temple



Sangha came to observe Obon and we talked to them about Obon traditions in Hawaii. After the service, we met the president of the Ganoji Temple BWA and mingled with the sangha. That evening, we had an outdoor barbecue with the Nakagawa family.

OBON AT GANOJI TEMPLE IN FUKUOKA

**BARBECUE WITH NAKAGAWA FAMILY****REV. AND MRS. NAKAGAWA**

One morning, we were invited to participate in a conversation class where we learned about communicating our true feelings. Throughout our stay, Nakagawa Sensei and his family members took us sightseeing to many places! Overall, this homestay program is one that I will always remember and I hope that I get to see the Nakagawa Family again very soon!



After spending five days in Fukuoka, we returned to Kyoto. We were given the opportunity to have tea with Lady Ohtani and talk to her about Hon-gwanji in Hawaii. It was a great honor to be able to speak with her. On this same day, we met the BWA Federation President Midori. She was very welcoming and she travelled with us until the time that we left Japan. After introductions with Midori-San, we met with the Exchange program committee. While meeting with them, I expressed my concerns about the decline in membership of many of our organizations. I was surprised to learn that the Japan organization is also noticing a decline in their membership. We determined that the best way to gain members is to plan engaging and meaningful activities.

JAPAN FEDERATION OF BWA's



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On the second to the last day of our trip, we travelled to Wakayama with Midori-San and Yoko-San. In Wakayama, we were greeted by Miho-San. After sightseeing in Marina City, we visited Reverend Kyoko Oka at the Wakayama Temple. We were also greeted by BWA and YBA members at a Wakayama Welcome Dinner. On our final day, we toured the Wakayama Castle and went to Miho's house for fellowship and lunch.



WELCOME TO WAKAYAMA DINNER



WAKAYAMA TEMPLE



As I said in the beginning, the experiences that I have gained during this exchange program have helped me to create memories that will surely last a lifetime. I am very grateful to the Hawaii and Japan Federations of BWA's for this wonderful opportunity. I am also thankful to the Nakagawa family for welcoming Zoi and I as their homestay guests. Thank you also to the coordinators of the YBICSE and BWA exchange programs. I am also very thankful to my Kapaa Hongwanji Sangha! All of your wisdom, guidance, and compassion has helped me become the person I am today and I am truly honored to say that I am a part of the Buddhist Women's Association!

**Shinsetsu ni shitekurete doumo
arigatou gozaimashita!**

THE END

Mark Your Calendars! 2018 Joint Conference

The Hongwanji will hold its first conference at the Ala Moana hotel in Honolulu from September 1 – 3, 2018. The conference will include the Lay Convention, the BWA Convention, the Minister's Spouses' organization, Jr. YBA, and Dharma School. Groups will hold their major conferences, and workshops will be open to everyone.

The theme of the conference is "Embrace Change – Harmony (Accept Differences)." Our keynote speaker will be Hawaii Attorney General Doug Chin, a national leader in the fight for civil rights.

Workshops will focus on the theme of harmony and be dharma-centered. You can engage in taiko drumming, ukulele playing, chanting, singing, calligraphy and photography! You will have opportunities to develop leadership skills, create crafts, learn about conservation, and practice some intergenerational activities that you can take back to your temples.

This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with our Shin Buddhist Sangha from across the state. You'll have a chance to make new friends and renew old friendships.

Conference Registration Information:

Registration cost includes:

2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, Sunday night banquet
Program booklet
Meeting materials

Early Registration: \$250 by January 20, 2018

Late Registration: \$275 by February 20, 2018

Make checks payable to:

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

Room Reservations at Ala Moana Hotel:

Please reserve your room at Ala Moana Hotel by February 24, 2018. After that date, we will release rooms in order to avoid paying a penalty.

Single or double occupancy:

Kona Tower	\$159.00
Waikiki Tower	179.00
Triple Occupancy	229.00

If you would like to reserve online, the link is:

https://aws.passkey.com/e/49413033?utm_source=11602&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=277106450

If you wish to reserve by phone, please use one of these numbers. Be sure to mention that you are with the Honpa Hongwanji Joint Conference

Reservations Toll Free: (800) 367-6025

Reservations Local Phone: (808) 955-4811

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16th World Buddhist
Women's Convention

San Francisco, California, USA

August 30 – September 1, 2019

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